



HOLIDAY COUNTDOWN

FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS

'Twas the Night Before Christmas, When All Thro' the House...Not a Creature Was Stirring, Not Even a Mouse — or the family cat, for that matter, because it knows it'll get something better than a dumb ol' mouse for Christmas dinner if it plays its cards right. Same with the family dog. Christmas is a time when Fido gets filet mignon, metaphorically speaking (or literally, in the case of some lucky dogs). So here are a few random ways to pamper your pets, or the pets of family and friends.

— Tom Henry
BLADE STAFF WRITER

Frame the Feline — Get a photograph of your cat (or dog) framed with an appropriate sentiment, such as Best Friend, Woof, Love Bone...or, for dogs, in the shape of a fire hydrant. **Bed, Bath and Beyond. \$11.99 to \$19.99.**



Give A...Water Buffalo? — Heifer International, www.heifer.org, is a global nonprofit helping people in 30 countries, including the United States, use animals to pull themselves out of poverty. Cows, sheep and — yes — even water buffaloes are among the animals it provides. Recipients use the animals for milk, wool, eggs, and fertilizer, and for work such as plowing fields. You can donate in any denomination, buy shares in an animal for as little as \$10, or provide funding for an entire beast. Examples: Goats, sheep, and pigs are \$120, water buffaloes are \$250, heifers are \$500, and camels are \$850. A hive of honeybees will set you back only \$30. **Heifer International. \$10 to \$850.**



No Rawhide, No Raw Gut — Want your dog to have a rawhide chew without the rawhide hazard of hard-to-digest pieces tearing up his or her tummy? Try **Smart Bones. Titgemeier's. \$15.96.**



Chewing: That's How We Roll — Tire Biter chew toys are so tough and rugged they look like they belong on a small truck. **Titgemeier's. \$15 or less.**



Take Me Home — What better way to show your love than to show you're willing to care for an animal? Remember that many dogs and cats like companions to pal around with, just like humans. Make sure to talk to experts and do some independent research first, though, to see if the dog or cat you have at home is a good candidate for a companion. When possible, take him or her to the adoption site with you. Also consider if it's in your budget. **Lucas County Dog Warden or Toledo Area Humane Society. \$100 and up.**



Canine Comforter — Get your dog (or cat) a heated bed. **PetSmart. \$46.99 to \$166.99.**

A Walk Around the Block, On Wheels — Question: Why would anyone sell a dog stroller? Answer: Because humans buy them. In fact, they apparently sell so well that manufacturers are making about as many different models of them as they do for babies. **Meijer. \$49.99 to \$224.99.**



Frozen Food or Make Your Own — Bil-Jac dog food and Frosty Paws treats don't necessarily fall under the category of gifts, but they could give your beast a break from the ordinary. **Kroger, The Andersons, Walmart, Petco. \$8 and less.** Or go organic and get a dog treat maker so Fido's owners can make their own dog treats. Be creative. Several models are available. **Amazon.com. \$39.99.** One example can be found at <http://www.amazon.com/Bake-A-Bone-The-Original-Treat-Maker>.



Pickle for Your Thoughts, Kitty — http://www.toledozoo.org/site/program/The_Giving_Tree. For as little as \$4, you can donate treats to the **Toledo Zoo's wolves and polar bears**; for only \$9, you can donate a plastic saucer sled to polar bears, seals, tigers, and snow leopards. Our favorite is the **giant plastic pickle** for the tigers going for \$85. **Toledo Zoo. \$4 to \$400.**



A-Ticket, A-Tasket — A basket of treats for your dog. **Basket Baskets, www.basketbaskets.com. \$33 to \$99.**

* Prices and availability subject to change.